

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-22, 25, and 27-34 are pending in the present application.

Claims 1, 2, 11, 25, and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over United States Patent No. 6,963,926 to Robinson in view of United States Patent No. 6,327,669 to Croslin.

Claims 3 and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Robinson in view of Croslin and further in view of United States Patent No. 6,744,775 to Beshai et al. (hereinafter "Beshai").

The status of claims 8, 10, 19, and 21 is not clear. The Office Action Summary indicates that these claims are rejected. However, they are not identified in a corresponding claim rejection.

Claims 12-18, 20, and 22 are allowed. Claims 4-7, 9, 28, and 30-34 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating allowable subject matter and for identifying claims that would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. In the interest of advancing prosecution, and without conceding the merit of the claim rejections, Applicants hereby amend the claims to place them in condition for allowance as follows.

Claim 1 is amended to incorporate the limitations of dependent claim 5 thereby overcoming the objection to claim 5 and placing amended claim 1 in condition for immediate allowance. Similarly, claim 25 is amended to incorporate the limitations of dependent claims 27-28 to overcome the objection to claim 28 and to place amended claim 25 in condition for allowance. Claims 5, 27, and 28 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Dependent claims 4, 29, and 31 are amended to conform with their amended base claims. In addition, claims 8, 10, 19, and 21 are amended to more clearly recite their respective inventions. Applicants submit that these amendments are not disclosed in the cited references. Support for amended claims 8, 10, 19, and 21 can be found throughout the specification and, among other places, beginning at [0042]. No new matter has been added.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims are now in condition for allowance. Claim 1 is allowable as previously noted. Claims 2-4 and 6-11 depend, directly or indirectly, from amended claim 1 and are believed allowable for at least the reason that they depend from an allowable base claim. Claims 12-18, 20, and 22 are presently allowed. Claims 19 and 21 depend from claim 12 and are believed allowable because they depend from an allowable base claim and by virtue of the current claim amendments. Claim 25 is allowable as discussed. Finally, claims 29-34 incorporate all of the limitations of claim 25 and are believed allowable for at least the reason that they depend from an allowable base claim.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 858-350-6100.

Respectfully submitted,


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